

Department of Religion

Professor: *Elkins, Geller, Hobbs, Kodera (Chair), Marini, Marlow*

Adjunct Associate Professor: *Rollman*

In a liberal arts college, the study of religion constitutes an integral part of the humanities and social sciences. Recognizing religion as an elemental expression of human life and culture, past and present, the department offers courses in the major religious traditions of the world. These courses examine both the individual and the collective dimensions of religion and approach their subject from a variety of perspectives including historical, textual, theological, and social scientific.

REL 104 Study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Geller

Critical introduction to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, studying its role in the history and culture of ancient Israel and its relationship to ancient Near Eastern cultures. Special focus on the fundamental techniques of literary, historical, and source criticism in modern scholarship, with emphasis on the Bible's literary structure and compositional evolution.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 105 Study of the New Testament

Hobbs

The writings of the New Testament as diverse expressions of early Christianity. Close reading of the texts, with particular emphasis upon the Gospels and the letters of Paul. Treatment of the literary, theological, and historical dimensions of the Christian scriptures, as well as of methods of interpretation. The beginnings of the break between the Jesus movement and Judaism will be specially considered.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 108 Introduction to Asian Religions

Kodera

An introduction to the major religions of India, Tibet, China, and Japan with particular attention to universal questions such as how to overcome the human predicament, how to perceive ultimate reality, and what is the meaning of death and the end of the world. Materials taken from Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Shinto. Comparisons made, when appropriate, with Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. *Normally alternates with REL 109.*

Prerequisite: None. Not open to students who have taken REL 109.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Summer, Fall 2009 Unit: 1.0

REL 109 Religions of the Silk Road

Marlow

An introduction to the major religious communities and traditions of East, South and West Asia, with particular attention to their contacts and interactions as facilitated by trade, travel and pilgrimage from antiquity until roughly the fifteenth century. The framework for our study of these religious cultures will be the 'Silk Road', which stretched from Eastern China to the Mediterranean Sea and linked together the many communities that thrived across Eurasia throughout the pre-industrial era. In addition to Buddhism and Islam, the course will cover Confucianism, Daoism, Jainism, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism, as well as Manichaeism and Nestorian Christianity. Readings are drawn from foundational sacred texts, and the accounts of merchants, travelers and pilgrims. Additional attention to the material cultures and artistic works produced by the religious communities of the Silk Road. *Normally alternates with REL 108.*

Prerequisite: None. Not open to students who have taken REL 108.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 200 Theories of Religion

Marini

An exploration of theoretical models and methods employed in the study of religions. Particular attention to approaches drawn from anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Readings taken from writers of continuing influence in the field: William James and Sigmund Freud, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner, Carl Jung and Mircea Eliade, Karl Marx and Paul Ricoeur. *Normally alternates with REL 230.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy or Social and Behavioral Analysis

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 202 Biblical Poetry

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A time to mourn, a time to dance: a survey of the diverse types of poetry in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Psalms of divine praise, thanksgiving and appeal: lamentation, wisdom, prophetic oracle, and love songs. The poetry will be studied for its artistic beauty and as a lens on to the history and beliefs of biblical Israel. *Normally alternates with REL 207.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 207 Goddesses, Queens, and Witches: Survey of the Ancient Near East

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An introduction to ancient Mesopotamia, Canaan and Anatolia, through a look at literature and material culture pertaining to women of the period and region. Topics include myths about, and prayers to, great goddesses such as Ishtar; laws of marriage and property; witches and witchcraft; the political institution of the Queen Mother; and the phenomenon of the Qadishtu, the women dedicated to the cult and temple of various deities. *Normally alternates with REL 202.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 209 Women, Sexuality, and Patriarchalism in the New Testament

Hobbs

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. The world from which Christianity emerged was largely patriarchal and sexist, with a variety of attitudes towards sexual behavior and marriage. The Christian movement itself took several different approaches toward each of these issues, which found their way into the New Testament collection and thus became the foundation for a multiplicity of stances in later centuries. This variety in the documents will be examined, with special attention to their roots and their results. *Normally alternates with REL 211.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 211 Jesus of Nazareth

Hobbs

Historical study of Jesus, first as he is presented in the Gospels, followed by interpretations of him at several subsequent stages of Christian history. In addition to the basic literary materials, examples from the visual arts and music will be considered, such as works by Michelangelo, Grünewald, J. S. Bach, Beethoven, and Rouault, as well as a film by Pasolini. The study will conclude with the modern “quest for the historical Jesus.” *Normally alternates with REL 209.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 215 Christian Spirituality

Elkins

A study of historical and contemporary writings that exemplify varieties of Christian spirituality. Historical texts include Augustine’s *Confessions*, Thomas à Kempis’ *The Imitation of Christ*, Teresa of Avila’s *Autobiography*, John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, and *The Way of the Pilgrim*. Contemporary authors include Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. *Normally alternates with REL 216.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 216 Christian Thought: 100-1600

Elkins

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A study of major issues and influential thinkers in the Christian religious tradition from the post-Biblical period through the Reformation. Good and evil, free will and determinism, orthodoxy and heresy, scripture and tradition, faith and reason, and love of God and love of neighbor examined through primary source readings. Special attention to the diversity of traditions and religious practices, including the cult of saints, the veneration of icons, and the use of scripture. *Normally alternates with REL 215.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 217 Christian Thought from the Reformation to the Present

Marini

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A study of defining issues and essential thinkers in the Christian religious tradition from the sixteenth century to the present. Faith and grace, free will and determinism, mysticism and radicalism, reason and emotion, secularization and existentialism, orthodoxy and doubt, religious morality and social action examined through primary source readings. Readings include works by Luther, Calvin, Pascal, Locke, Wesley, Newman, Kierkegaard, Bonhoeffer, and Tillich.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 218 Religion in America

Marini

A study of the religions of Americans from the colonial period to the present. Special attention to the impact of religious beliefs and practices in the shaping of American culture and society. Representative readings from the spectrum of American religions including Aztecs and Conquistadors in New Spain, the Puritans, Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Isaac Meyer Wise, Mary Baker Eddy, Dorothy Day, Black Elk, Martin Luther King, Jr., and contemporary Fundamentalists. *Normally alternates with REL 220.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 220 Religious Themes in American Fiction

Marini

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Human nature and destiny, good and evil, love and hate, loyalty and betrayal, tradition and assimilation, salvation and damnation, God and fate in the writings of Hawthorne, Thoreau, Melville, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Leslie Marmon Silko, Rudolfo Anaya, Alice Walker, and Allegra Goodman. Reading and discussion of these texts as expressions of the diverse religious cultures of nineteenth- and twentieth-century America, with a postscript on the popular contemporary Protestant Fundamentalist fiction of Tim LaHaye. *Normally alternates with REL 218.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Language and Literature or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 221 Catholic Studies

Elkins

Contemporary issues in the Roman Catholic Church, with particular attention to the American situation. Topics include sexual morality, social ethics, spirituality, women's issues, dogma, liberation theology, ecumenism, and inter-religious dialogue. Readings represent a spectrum of positions. *Normally alternates with REL 226.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 224/MUS 224 Hildegard of Bingen

Elkins and Fontijn (Music)

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. This interdisciplinary course will focus on the music, dramatic productions, vision literature, and theology of the renowned twelfth-century abbess Hildegard of Bingen. Attention will also be devoted to her scientific work on medicine, the manuscript illuminations of her visions, and to contemporary renderings of her music. *Students may register for either REL 224 or MUS 224 and credit will be granted accordingly.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Arts, Music, Theater, Film, Video, or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 225 Women in Christianity

Elkins

Martyrs, mystics, witches, wives, virgins, reformers, and ministers: a survey of women in Christianity from its origins until today. Focus on women's writings, both historical and contemporary. Special attention to modern interpreters – feminists, Third-World women, and women of color.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 226 The Virgin Mary

Elkins

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. The role of the Virgin Mary in historical and contemporary Christianity. Topics include Mary in the Bible and Apocryphal writings, her cult in the Middle Ages, artistic productions in her honor, theological debates about her, and her appearances at Guadalupe, Lourdes, and Fatima. Attention also to the relation between concepts of Mary and attitudes toward virginity, the roles of women, and “the feminization of the deity.” *Normally alternates with REL 221.*

Prerequisite: None. Not open to students who have taken REL [316].

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 228 Fundamentalisms: A Comparative Approach

Geller

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. From its earliest application to a movement within American Protestantism, the term “fundamentalism” is now often used to characterize the most conservative wings of several different religious traditions. Focusing on such representative groups within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the course will explore such questions as: do these groups have anything in common? Is “fundamentalism” anti-modern or itself a modern religious phenomenon? Is the term “fundamentalist” helpful or misleading?

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 230 Ethics

Marini

An inquiry into the nature of values and the methods of moral decision-making. Examination of selected ethical issues including self-interest, freedom, collective good, capitalism, just war, racism, environmental pollution, globalism, and religious morality. Introduction to case study and ethical theory as tools for determining moral choices. *Normally alternates with REL 200.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 240 Romans, Jews, and Christians in the Roman Empire

Geller

At the birth of the Roman Empire virtually all of its inhabitants were practicing polytheists. Three centuries later, the Roman Emperor Constantine was baptised as a Christian and his successors eventually banned public sacrifices to the gods and goddesses who had been traditionally worshipped around the Mediterranean. This course will examine Roman era Judaism, Graeco-Roman polytheism, and the growth of the Jesus movement into the dominant religion of the late antique world.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 242 Introduction to Rabbinic Literature

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An introduction to the main Rabbinic writings of the first half of the first millennium: the Mishnah, the Talmud, the Midrashic writings on Scripture, and early mystical texts. *Normally alternates with REL 248.*

Prerequisite: None
Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 243 Women in the Biblical World

Geller

The roles and images of women in the Bible, and in early Jewish and Christian literature, examined in the context of the ancient societies in which these documents emerged. Special attention to the relationships among archaeological, legal, and literary sources in reconstructing the status of women in these societies. *Normally alternates with REL 244.*

Prerequisite: None
Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 244 Jerusalem: The Holy City

Geller

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An exploration of the history, archaeology, and architecture of Jerusalem from the Bronze Age to the present. Special attention both to the ways in which Jerusalem's Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities transformed Jerusalem in response to their religious and political values and also to the role of the city in the ongoing mid-East and Israeli-Palestinian peace process. *Normally alternates with REL 243.*

Prerequisite: None
Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 245 The Holocaust and the Nazi State

Geller

An examination of the origins, character, course, and consequences of Nazi anti-Semitism during the Third Reich. Special attention to Nazi racialist ideology, and how it shaped policies which affected such groups as the Jews, the disabled, the Roma and the Sinti, Poles and Russians, Afro-Germans, homosexuals, and women. Consideration also of the impact of Nazism on the German medical and teaching professions.

Prerequisite: None
Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy
Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 246 Jewish Civilization

Geller

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Historical survey of the Jewish community from its beginnings to the present. Exploration of the elements of change and continuity within the evolving Jewish community as it interacted with the larger Greco-Roman world, Islam, Christianity, and post-Enlightenment Europe and America. Consideration given to the central ideas and institutions of the Jewish tradition in historical perspective.

Prerequisite: None. Not open to students who have taken REL [140].

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 248 The Dead Sea Scrolls

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A study of the documents and archaeology of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Survey of major text genres, such as law, community organization, scriptural interpretation, prayer, amulets and coded treasure maps. Focus upon key archaeological matters, including the physical geography of the Dead Sea region, the “Essene” settlement structure, art and architecture, ritual baths, religious artifacts, and objects of daily use—weaponry, cosmetics and writing tools. The scrolls and material culture will be examined in their own right and in terms of their relationship to the broader history of Judaism in the Roman Era, Rabbinic Literature, and the New Testament. *Normally alternates with REL 242.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 250 Research or Individual Study

Prerequisite: Open to first-year students and sophomores only.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 250H Research or Individual Study

Prerequisite: Open to first-year students and sophomores only.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 0.5

REL 251 Religion in South Asia

Marlow

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An examination of religions in South Asia as expressed in sacred texts and arts, religious practices, and institutions from 2500 B.C.E. to the present. Concentration on the origins and development of Brahmanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Sikhism, and the interaction of religious communities in South Asian history.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O

Unit: 1.0

REL 253 Buddhist Thought and Practice

Kodera

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A study of Buddhist views of the human predicament and its solution, using different teachings and forms of practice from India, Southeast Asia, Tibet, China, and Japan. Topics including the historic Buddha's sermons, Buddhist psychology and cosmology, meditation, bodhisattva career, Tibetan Tantricism, Pure Land, Zen, and dialogues with and influence on the West. *Normally alternates with REL 257.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O

Unit: 1.0

REL 254 Chinese Thought and Religion

Kodera

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Continuity and diversity in the history of Chinese thought and religion from the ancient sage-kings of the third millennium B.C.E. to the present. Topics include: Confucianism, Taoism, Chinese Buddhism, folk religion, and their further developments and interaction. Materials drawn from philosophical and religious and literary works. *Normally alternates with REL 255.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O

Unit: 1.0

REL 255 Japanese Religion and Culture

Kodera

Constancy and change in the history of Japanese religious thought and its cultural and literary expression from the prehistoric "age of the gods" to contemporary Japan. An examination of Japanese indebtedness to, and independence from, Korea and China, assimilation and rejection of the West, and preservation of indigenous tradition. Topics include: Shinto, distinctively Japanese interpretations of Buddhism, neo-Confucianism, their role in modernization and nationalism, Western colonialism, and modern Japanese thought as a crossroad of East and West. *Normally alternates with REL 254.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring

Unit: 1.0

REL 257 Contemplation and Action

Kodera

An exploration of the relationship between the two polar aspects of being religious. Materials drawn from across the globe, both culturally and historically. Topics include: self-cultivation and social responsibility, solitude and compassion, human frailty as a basis for courage, anger as an expression of love, non-violence, western adaptations of eastern spirituality, meditation and the environmental crisis. Readings selected from Confucius, Gautama Buddha, Ryokan, Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Heschel, Dag Hammarskjöld, Simone Weil, Thomas Merton, Thich Nhat Hanh, Henri Nouwen, Beverly Harrison, Benjamin Hoff, Reuben Habito, and others. *Normally alternates with REL 253.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 259 Christianity in Asia

Kodera

History of the Christian tradition in South and East Asia from the first century to the present. Emphasis on the Christian impact, both positive and negative, on Asian societies; why Asia rejected Western Christianity; and the development of uniquely Asian forms of Christian belief, practice and socio-political engagement. Topics include: Thomas' supposed "apostolic mission" to Kerala, India in the first century, the Nestorian "heretics" in T'ang China, symbiosis of Jews, Muslims and Christians in ninth-century China, the two sixteenth-century Jesuits (Francis Xavier and Matteo Ricci), Spanish colonialism and the Roman Catholics of the Philippines, the 26 martyrs of Japan (1597), the Taiping Rebellion, Uchimura's "No Church Christianity," Horace Allen in Korea, Kitamori's "Pain of God Theology," Endo's "Silence of God," India's "untouchables" and Christianity, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the Three Self Movement in the People's Republic of China, Korea's Minjung Theology, and the rise of Asian American Christianity.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 260 Islamic/ate Civilizations

Marlow

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Historical survey of Muslim-majority societies and the diverse cultural forms produced within them from the seventh century to the beginnings of the modern period. Topics include literary and artistic expression, architecture, institutions, philosophical and political thought, religious thought and practice. Critical attention to the concept of 'civilization' and its uses and drawbacks for understanding the complex historical and cultural processes under study in the course. *Normally alternates with REL 262.*

Prerequisite: None. Not open to students who have taken REL [160].

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O

Unit: 1.0

REL 261 Cities of the Islamic World

Marlow

An exploration of the religious and cultural history of selected cities across the Islamic world from late antiquity to the present. Examines and critiques the concept of 'the Islamic city' while focusing on the study of particular cities, including Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, Istanbul, Isfahan, Samarqand, Lucknow and Lahore. Topics include migration, settlement, and the construction of new cities; conversion; the emergence of 'holy cities' as centers for pilgrimage, religious education and Islamic legal scholarship; sacred space and architecture; religious diversity in urban environments; and the impact of colonialism on urban life. *Normally alternates with REL 269.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring

Unit: 1.0

REL 262 The Formation of the Islamic Tradition

Marlow

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Historical study of the Islamic tradition with particular attention to the seventh to eleventh centuries. Topics include the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'an, and Qur'anic interpretation, tradition, law, ethics, theology, Shi'i Islam, and Sufism. Attention to the diversity within the Islamic tradition and to the continuing processes of reinterpretation, into the modern period. *Normally alternates with REL 260.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O

Unit: 1.0

REL 263 Islam in the Modern World

Rollman

The role of Islam in the modern history of Turkey, the Arab world, Iran, and South Asia, with particular reference to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Explores the rise of nationalism, secularism, modernism, "fundamentalism," and revolution in response to the political, socio-economic, and ideological crises of the period. Issues include legal and educational reform, the status of women, dress, and economics. Readings from contemporary Muslim religious scholars, intellectuals, and literary figures.

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring

Unit: 1.0

REL 269 Religion and Culture in Iran

Marlow

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An exploration of the history of Iran and its peoples from antiquity to the present. Topics include cultural and religious life; social and economic developments; government and court politics; the interactions among rural, urban and nomadic communities; the lives and roles of women; commerce, cultural exchange, and the impact on Iran of European imperial rivalries; the forging of the nation state, discontent and dissent, the Islamic Revolution, post-revolutionary Iran, and the Iranian diaspora. *Normally alternates with REL 261.*

Prerequisite: None

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 290 Kyoto: Center of Japan's Religion and Culture (Wintersession in Kyoto)

Kodera

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Hands-on observation and critical analyses of religion and culture in Kyoto, Japan's capital for over a millennium. Topics include: Shinto and Buddhism in traditional Japanese art and culture, such as "tea ceremony," calligraphy, poetry, theater and martial arts; Shinto and Japan's appreciation of nature; Japan's selective memory of the Pacific War and Japan's growing nationalism; today's Buddhist clergy as specialists of the world of the dead, in sharp contrast to the earlier (pre-seventeenth century) focus on meditation and acts of mercy for the living; "new religions" in contemporary Japanese society and politics; Japan's assimilation of Western religions, as manifested in youth culture; the complicity of religion in the resurgence of nationalism and xenophobia; the contemporary Japanese fascination with the "other world". Kyoto will be the center of operation with possible side trips to Nara, Hiroshima, and perhaps Tokyo. Length: Two and a half weeks in Japan, with three days of orientation on campus prior to departure. *Not offered every year. Subject to Dean's Office approval.*

Prerequisite: At least one course in Asian religion; though not required, preference given to students of Asian religions and of East Asian Studies. Application required.

Enrollment limited to 10 and with written permission of the instructor.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 0.5

REL 298 New Testament Greek

Hobbs

Reading and discussion of many characteristic New Testament texts, with attention to aspects of Koiné Greek which differ from the classical Attic dialect.

Prerequisite: One year of Greek; or exemption examination; or permission of instructor.

Distribution: Language and Literature or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 303 Seminar. The Sacrifice of the Beloved Child in the Bible and Its Interpretations

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. The biblical tale of the near sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22) and its ongoing historical and cultural significance. Focus on this core narrative, and human sacrifice more broadly, in its biblical, ancient Near Eastern, and Mediterranean contexts. Examination of the Genesis narrative in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. Exploration of the relevant motifs in the literature and art of the West from the Middle Ages to the present. *Normally alternates with REL 305.*

Prerequisite: At least one course on the Bible or permission of instructor.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 305 Seminar. The Book of Genesis

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. The Book of Genesis contains the foundational biblical narratives: creation of the world, flood, growth of humanity and Israel's ancestral accounts. The work will be approached from a literary and historical-critical point of view, with reference to relevant Ancient Near Eastern mythology. *Normally alternates with REL 303.*

Prerequisite: At least one course on the Bible or permission of instructor. Not open to students who have taken [205].

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 308 Seminar. Paul's Letter to the Romans

Hobbs

An exegetical examination of the "Last Will and Testament" of the Apostle Paul, concentrating especially on his theological construction of the Gospel, on his stance vis-à-vis Judaism and its place in salvation-history, and on the theologies of his opponents as revealed in his letters. *Normally alternates with REL 310.*

Prerequisite: At least one course on the Bible.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 310 Seminar. Mark, the Earliest Gospel

Hobbs

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An exegetical examination of the Gospel of Mark, with special emphasis on its character as a literary, historical, and theological construct, presenting the proclamation of the Gospel in narrative form. The Gospel's relationships to the Jesus tradition, to the Old Testament/Septuagint, and to the Christological struggles in the early church will be focal points of study. *Normally alternates with REL 308.*

Prerequisite: At least one course on the Bible.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 317 Seminar. Christian Ritual

Marini

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An intensive study of selected Christian ritual practices from the apostolic period to the present. Topics include the origins of Christian liturgy; the doctrines of baptism and eucharist; the development of the Roman Mass and the Orthodox Divine Liturgy; Protestant worship reforms in the Reformation; Evangelical revivalism; Pentecostal charismatic expression; and liturgical innovation in Third World Christianity. Particular attention to musical and architectural settings, liturgical and hymnic language, and ritual theory. *Normally alternates with REL 319.*

Prerequisite: 216, 217, or 218, or MUS 200 or permission of instructor.

Distribution: Arts, Music, Theatre, Film, Video or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 319 Seminar. Religion, Law, and Politics in America

Marini

A study of the relationships among religion, fundamental law, and political culture in the American experience. Topics include established religion in the British colonies, religious ideologies in the American Revolution, religion and rebellion in the Civil War crisis, American civil religion, and the New Religious Right. Special attention to the separation of church and state, selected Supreme Court cases on the religion clauses of the First Amendment, and religious and moral issues raised in the 2008 presidential election campaign. *Normally alternates with REL 317.*

Prerequisite: 200, 217, or at least one 200-level course in American religion, history, sociology, or politics.

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 323 Seminar. Feminist Theologies

Elkins

A study of modern feminist reassessments and reinterpretations of Christianity and its images of God. Special attention to Latina, African American, and Asian American authors. Consideration also of alternative concepts of divinity proposed by ecofeminists, lesbians, and devotees of goddesses. *Normally alternates with REL 326.*

Prerequisite: One course in Hebrew Bible, New Testament, or Christianity; or permission of instructor.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy or Social and Behavioral Analysis

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 326 Seminar. Liberation Theology

Elkins

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A close reading of recent works by major Latin American and Hispanic liberation theologians. Some attention also to Asian, African, and African American authors. *Normally alternates with REL 323.*

Prerequisite: One course in Hebrew Bible, New Testament, or Christianity; or permission of instructor.

Distribution: Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 342 Seminar. Archaeology of the Biblical World

Geller

An examination of the ways in which archaeological data contribute to the understanding of the history of ancient Israel, and the Jewish and Christian communities of the Roman Empire.

Prerequisite: At least one course in archaeology, biblical studies, classical civilization, early Christianity, or early Judaism.

Distribution: Historical Studies

Semester: Fall Unit: 1.0

REL 350 Research or Individual Study

Prerequisite: Open to juniors and seniors only.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 350H Research or Individual Study

Prerequisite: Open to juniors and seniors only.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 0.5

REL 353 Seminar. Zen Buddhism

Kodera

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. Zen, the long known yet little understood tradition, studied with particular attention to its historical and ideological development, meditative practice, and expressions in poetry, painting, and martial arts. *Normally alternates with REL 354.*

Prerequisite: At least one course in Asian religions.

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 354 Seminar. Tibetan Buddhism

Kodera

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. A critical, historical and comparative study of Buddhism that unfolded in the unique geographical, historical, cultural and religious climate of Tibet, and of the Tibetan communities in diaspora after the Communist Chinese takeover. Topics include: pre-Buddhist religions of Tibet; development of the Vajrayāna teaching and the Tantric practice; the cult of Tārā; Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva and the Dalai Lama; the plight of the Tibetan lamas and refugees in India and in the West; continuing controversy in China; the appeal and misunderstanding of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism in the West; the future of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. *Normally alternates with REL 353.*

Prerequisite: At least one course in Asian religions. Not open to students who took this course as REL 353 in 2005-06.

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 357 Seminar. Issues in Comparative Religion

Kodera

Promises and challenges in the evolving debate over how different truth claims and faith communities might seek tolerance, respect, and coexistence. How to reconcile tradition with innovation, doctrine with practice, contemplation with action, globalism with tribalism. Impediments of monotheism and “revealed scripture.” The role of religion in prejudice and discrimination; and yet also for peace and justice. The rise of Buddhism in the West and of Christianity in the East. Readings include works by Wilfred Cantwell Smith, John Hick, Uchimura Kanzo, Endo Shusako, Raimundo Panikkar, Thich Nhat Hanh, the Dalai Lama, and Diana Eck.

Prerequisite: At least one course in religion.

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 360 Senior Thesis Research

Prerequisite: By permission of department. See Academic Distinctions.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 361 Seminar. Studying Islam and the Middle East

Marlow

An exploration of the study and representation of Islam and West Asia/the Middle East in European and American scholarship and journalism, from the earliest translations of the Qur’an to contemporary issues and debates. Topics include medieval European images of Islam, Orientalism, colonialism, and also the modern press and popular culture.

Prerequisite: Open to juniors and seniors, and sophomores who have taken at least one unit in Middle Eastern Studies.

Distribution: Historical Studies

Semester: Spring Unit: 1.0

REL 364 Seminar. Sufism: Islamic Mysticism

Marlow

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An interdisciplinary exploration of the diverse manifestations of mysticism in Islamic contexts. Topics include the experiences and writings of individual Sufis, including Rabi'a, al-Junayd, Hujviri, Ibn al-'Arabi, Jalal al-Din Rumi, 'Abd al-Qadir Gilani, Ruzbihan Baqli; the formation of Sufi organizations and development of mystical paths; the place of Sufism in Islamic legal, theological and philosophical traditions as well as in Muslim religious practice; Sufism in local contexts; both urban and rural; holy men and women; Sufism's permeation of artistic and aesthetic traditions, especially poetry and music; the reception, interpretations and practices of Sufism in Western countries. *Normally alternates with REL 367.*

Prerequisite: Open to juniors and seniors, students who have taken at least one unit in Middle Eastern Studies or Religion, and by permission of the instructor.

Distribution: Historical Studies or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 367 Seminar. Muslim Travellers

Marlow

NOT OFFERED IN 2008-09. An exploration of the experiences and writings of Muslim travelers from the Middle Ages to the present in West, South, East and Central Asia, North Africa, Europe and America. Focus on the wide range of cultural encounters facilitated by journeys for purposes of pilgrimage, study, diplomacy, exploration, migration and tourism, and on the varied descriptions of such encounters in forms of literary expression associated with travel, including poetry, pilgrimage manuals, narrative accounts, letters, memoirs, and graffiti. Authors include Biruni, Ibn Jubayr, Ibn Battuta, Evliya Çelebi, al-Tahtawi, Farahani, Abu Talib Khan, Asayesh. *Normally alternates with REL 364.*

Prerequisite: Open to juniors and seniors, students who have taken at least one unit in Middle Eastern Studies, and by permission of the instructor.

Distribution: Language and Literature or Religion, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy

Semester: N/O Unit: 1.0

REL 370 Senior Thesis

Prerequisite: 360 and permission of department.

Distribution: None

Semester: Fall, Spring Unit: 1.0

Related Courses

For Credit Towards the Major

Students wishing to take related courses for their major or minor outside the department must obtain approval of their advisor in advance.

Directions for Election

As of 5/1/2008

The major consists of a minimum of nine units, at least two of which must be at the 300-level, including a seminar, and no more than two 100-level courses. A maximum of three courses taken outside the Department may be counted toward the major, no more than two of which may be taken at an institution other than Wellesley.

The major requires both a concentration in a specific field of study and adequate exposure to the diversity of the world's religions and cultures. To ensure depth, a major must present a concentration of at least four courses, including a seminar, in an area of study that she has chosen in consultation with and approved by her departmental advisor. This concentration may be defined by, for example, a particular religion, cultural-geographical area, canon, period of time, or theme. To promote breadth, a major must complete a minimum of two courses, also to be approved by her departmental advisor, devoted to religious cultures or traditions that are distinct both from each other and from the area of concentration. All majors are urged to discuss their courses of study with their advisors before the end of the first semester of their junior year.

The minor consists of a minimum of five courses, including at least one seminar and no more than two 100-level courses. Three of the five courses, including a seminar, should be within an area of concentration chosen by the student in consultation with and approved by her departmental advisor.

For some students, studies in the original language of religious traditions will be especially valuable. Majors and minors interested in pursuing language study should consult their advisors to determine the appropriateness of such work for their programs.

Honors

The only route to honors in the major is writing a thesis and passing an oral examination. To be admitted to the thesis program, a student must have a grade point average of at least 3.5 in all work in the major field above the 100-level; the department may petition on her behalf if her GPA in the major is between 3.0 and 3.5. See Academic Distinctions.